



FLASHPOINT

The Official Newsletter of Lynchburg Fire & EMS

Chief's Corner

Balcony View and the Captain

You may hear the term "view from the balcony" to describe how leaders should view their organization. In this context, I believe it is meant to demonstrate how things change when looked at from a global point of view. I consider this "balcony view" approach to leadership to be critical in order to fairly evaluate people and determine how the organization actually functions.

Recently, I have been using the "balcony view" to analyze how the department's various ranks interact with each other and how their position influences employee behavior. For example, does the experience of a battalion chief influence a firefighter more than the direct supervision of the captain? Do the spoken words of the chief mean more than the written word of a memo? I could go on and on about the many questions this topic presents; however, I would like to focus on the captain's involvement in influencing employees.

There is a reason a captain is assigned to every engine and truck company and it is not to baby-sit adults in a fire station. Far from that, we expect our captains to provide the vital link in making certain employees are well trained, safe, and function under an approved umbrella of policies. All of these tasks are necessary to run an efficient and effective organization.

I firmly believe the captain to be the most critical link in our delivery system and the position that shares the greatest responsibility for determining the success or failure of our operation. More plainly put, the captain sees that our services are delivered safely.

Take a minute to examine firefighter injuries and deaths. In all probability, for every firefighter killed in a vehicle crash

there was an officer providing oversight. For every overweight and out-of-shape firefighter that has a heart attack on the scene of a fire there were first-line officers that allowed the situation to be present. For every firefighter killed or injured at a fire there were first-line officers approving of their tactical position on the scene.

My point is that if you are a captain, you should take your responsibility very seriously. Your people are counting on you to make certain they perform the practical drills that will make them proficient. They are counting on you to encourage them toward a healthy life style. They are counting on you to encourage and support their efforts to get an education and develop the skills necessary to advance in the department. They are counting on you to mentor and coach them, and that is a tremendous responsibility.

As a firefighter in this department, you have the right to demand that your supervisor help you, watch over you, and hold you accountable for your skills and behavior. Your life depends on it.

Someone recently asked me how important succession training was to the fire service. I remarked that our lives and the lives of our customers depend upon us being prepared for the challenges of leadership. It just so happens that the most challenging responsibility begins with the first line supervisor and, in many cases, that is the position least prepared to deal with that responsibility.

As we continue to prepare people in this organization for leadership responsibilities, I hope that each shift will take the opportunity to discuss how the role of captain, and the roles of other firefighters and officers, are important to our department and our personnel. Our success and the lives of our folks depend on it. Until next time, stay safe.

B. Smith

UPCOMING EVENTS

Victory House Building Blitz

Date: May 3, 2003
Place: Victory Christian Fellowship
615 Leesville Road
Time: 7:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Kids' Safe Day

Date: May 3, 2003
Place: River Ridge Mall
Time: 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Operation Smoke Detector Breakfast

Date: May 8, 2003
Place: Ramada Inn
Time: 7:30 a.m.

National EMS Week - May 18-24

Lynchburg Progressive Firefighter's Community Health & Life Safety Day

Date: May 24, 2003
Place: Jubilee Center
Time: 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Annual Retiree Social

Date: June 18, 2003
Place: Fire Administration
Time: 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon

Rookie School

Scheduled to begin on July 7, 2003

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Fire Chief Receives Award

The U. S. Fire Administration has awarded four fire service executives the National Fire Academy's (NFA) Outstanding Research Award. Fire Chief Buddy Martinette's research paper was among the four that were selected from all of the academy's Executive Fire Officer Program (EFOP) applied research papers submitted in 2002.

Along with the other three recipients, Chief Martinette was selected from a field of over 800 current Executive Fire Officer Program participants. Chief Martinette's submission was entitled "Learning Organizations and Leadership Style."

Awarded annually, the NFA Outstanding Research Award recognizes excellent applied research projects completed by EFOP students. You may view the research contributions of all four of the recipients online at www.usfa.fema.gov/fire-service/nfa-on2k.cfm.

Operation Smoke Detector

Kick-Off Breakfast



Operation Smoke Detector activities will once again be gaining momentum! Over 150 area businesses, churches, and social and civic organizations have been invited to attend an "Operation Smoke Detector Kick-off Breakfast" on May 8, 2003, to learn how they can partner with the Lynchburg Fire & EMS Department to ensure that every home in Lynchburg has a working smoke detector.

Upcoming efforts will be focused on having businesses incorporate Operation Smoke Detector activities into the services that they provide to their customers on a daily basis. Together we will save lives and protect the property of the citizens of Lynchburg.

Reminder



Do you know someone who deserves recognition for recent achievements? Have you recently witnessed a fellow employee or citizen who performed a courageous act? If so, we want to know about it! Submit nominations to the Awards Committee by SEPTEMBER 1st. (You may obtain a copy of the nomination form on the department's intranet page within the on-line policy entitled "employee recognition.")

If you have questions, contact any of the following Awards Committee members: Adam Davis, Jennifer Carey, Sherry Pullum, Anthony Smith, Curry Rice, or Mike Richardson.

Class Act Awards

Following are the Class Act Award recipients for April 2003.

Stewart Barney

For providing exceptional service to a citizen involved in an automobile accident on March 15th.

Sean Regan

For providing exceptional service to an internal customer. (First Aid Training for staff at Social Services.)

David Jackson & Nathan Chapman

For going above and beyond the call of duty to help a citizen.

Brad Ferguson

For going above and beyond the call of duty to help a citizen.

Mike Bort

For assisting with curriculum development, pre-delivery inspection, and unit operations for the fire safety trailer.

Rod Smith

For assisting with fabrication of window covers for the fire safety trailer.

Grant Committee

For assistance with procurement of the fire safety trailer.

Jason Campbell & Katherine Dunnville

For providing exceptional assistance to a citizen.



News from the Training Division



Certifications/Development

National Fire Service Staff and Command

Darrell Evans & Anthony Smith

Driver/Pump Operator

Cary Word	Fletcher Wimbush
Jim Wilson	Richard Ware
Nick Thomas	Layne Terrell
Tim Station	John Ripley
Ricky Ring	Sean Regan
Tony Peeler	Carey Orange
Jimmy Mitchell	Phillip Meeks
Stuart Massie	Diron Martin
Art Lipscomb	Paul Kilgore
Van Johnson	Brian Jones
David Jackson	Roger Harris
Thomas Goode	Daryl DuBose
Charlie Copes	Earl Copes
Roger Colinger	Ronnie Coleman
Jennifer Carey	Frankie Campbell
Maurice Braxton	Ben Barber
Chris Adams	

Driver/Operator - Aerial

Steve Jackson

Emergency Response to Terrorism

Preston Crawford & Ricky Ring

Emergency Response to Terrorism-Tactical Consideration Emergency Medical Services

Carla Mann

Incident Command

Ronnie Coleman

Virginia Certified Fire Marshal

Doug DeJarnette

Advanced Officials' Module of the Virginia Building Code Academy

Doug DeJarnette

EMSAT Videos

The newest EMSAT videos are now available for viewing. These videos are entitled, "Basic BLS Procedures" and "Emergency Response Teams." Contact Jeannie O'Brien at Fire Administration. Remember this is an easy way to earn continuing education units.



Battalion Chief Promotions

Congratulations to Ed Jones and Darrell Evans who will be promoted to the position of battalion chief effective May 7, 2003.



Battalion Chief
Ed Jones

PROFILE

- Member of the Lynchburg Fire & EMS Department for 23 years
- Promoted to captain in 1990
- Member of Technical Rescue Team since its inception
- Married 21 years and father of one son
- Hobbies: Hunting and fishing



Battalion Chief
Darrell Evans

PROFILE

- Member of the Lynchburg Fire & EMS Department for 28 years
- Promoted to captain in 1993
- Interim Training Officer since July 2002
- Married 25 years and father of one son
- Hobby: Riding his Harley Davidson!

UPCOMING PROMOTIONAL INFORMATION

An official promotional ceremony will be held in the Fire Administration Training Room on July 10th at 6:00 p.m. for battalion chief and captain promotions.

The Master Firefighter promotional process test will be administered in mid-June and continue into July. The date for the Master Firefighter promotional ceremony has not yet been scheduled. More information will be forthcoming as it is available.

HIPAA Comes to Town!

Beginning April 14th, Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) "Privacy" requirements became effective for the nation. Basically what this means is that any information (written or electronic) that identifies an individual and describes his/her medical condition or treatment is considered "protected health information."

On a recent visit to your pharmacy, physician's office, or hospital you may have received HIPAA privacy notice forms to review and/or sign. The department is required to provide similar information to the patients we treat and/or transport. Our main emphasis is to inform our patients of how we may utilize their protected health information without their specific authorization, and to document such notification. In addition to using this information to provide treatment, we may also utilize this information to bill for services and to support our health care operations (e.g. quality assurance activities, etc.). This is an arduous task due to the emergency nature of our service provision.

There are additional circumstances under which we can share patient protected health care information; however, we are fortunate that our services are more narrowly focused than most health care practitioners. Thus, we can more easily avoid the potential pitfalls that face the unwary. However, it would be a mistake to view HIPAA regulations as merely a "bump in the road." There are some very serious consequences for those providers who knowingly share protected health information inappropriately.

Employees who utilize this information to provide quality service, while ensuring that such information is not distributed in a haphazard manner, should experience little difficulty. Common sense will provide most of the guidance necessary to navigate within HIPAA regulations.

If you have any questions, contact Will McChesney for clarification. A set of policies will soon be distributed that will help address problems that may arise from time to time.

May Anniversaries

Art Lipscomb	26 years
Mike Bort	24 years
Kent Ferguson	23 years
Carolyn Anders	22 years
Chris Adams	9 years
Kara James	4 years

Farewell

Judith Lambert, Administrative Secretary in the Fire Marshal's Office, retired on May 1, 2003, with five years of service.

With 4 1/2 years of service, the department also bids fond farewell to Firefighter Brian Kessler. We wish him well in Florida!

Volunteers Needed for Big Brothers Big Sisters

Big Brothers Big Sisters will be sponsoring a morning of Putt Putt golf for children on Saturday, May 17th from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. The event will be held at Putt Putt Golf and Games on Timberlake Road.



Big Brothers and Big Sisters has requested that members of the Fire Department participate in this event with the children. The event is free of charge for all participants.

If you are interested in participating, contact Ronnie Lewis so that you can be paired with a child for the event.



Safety Corner

Firefighter Deaths

It seems that every time I read a notice of a firefighter death, the cause is a heart attack. To date, 13 of 28 deaths ranging in age from 34 to 78, were caused by heart attacks. Fifty percent of line-of-duty deaths are cardiovascular in nature and this ratio has been holding steady for some time. A little deeper look into the numbers shows that the older firefighters tend to suffer the heart attacks and the younger firefighters tend to die from trauma.

There are 7 basic risk factors for heart disease. Three of these factors you cannot control, and only you have complete control over the other four factors. The three uncontrollable risk factors are:

Gender - Men are at a higher risk than women.

Heredity - You cannot change your genetic make up. If heart disease runs in your family, you have an increased risk to also suffer or die from heart disease.

Age - The older you get, the greater your risk of dying from heart disease (and all other causes as well).

The other four risk factors that only you have complete and sole control over are:

Smoking - This is the number one preventable risk factor not just for heart attacks, but also for strokes, hypertension, and many cancers.

The next three work hand in hand and are:

Diet, weight and exercise

"You are what you eat," is an old but very true expression. High fat content meals are becoming the American way of death. Improper diets with high fat and cholesterol content, low nutrient content, lacking in minerals and essential vitamins lead not just to increased heart disease, but also to all types of cancers and other illnesses and diseases. Many of us are overweight and we wonder how we got there. The answer is improper diet and lack of exercise. It is these three items that affect your total cholesterol levels. By modifying your lifestyle with a proper diet and a regular exercise program, your excess weight will come off, your cholesterol levels will change for the better and you will once again control your life and reduce your risk factors.

Walking is one of the easiest and most convenient activities one can do. Jogging, especially for the overweight, will add too much stress to your ankles, knees and hips. Whether you jog one mile, or walk one mile, you have exerted the same amount of effort. Only the intensity is different. Walking has been shown to offer 80 to 90% of the cardio-protective effect that jogging does. Start off with a 5-minute walk after supper. Walk at a pace where you can carry on a normal conversation. Increase your walking time by 3 to 5 minutes each week. Add small, incremental increases in time. It took you several years to add that weight, so expect taking some time to lose it. Measure your weight once each week. Your body weight normally fluctuates on a daily basis, so always check it at the same time. It is usually best to check it first thing in the morning after you have emptied your bladder and before you eat anything. This is one "game" where the real winners are the losers. You have to lose weight to win. The only way you will fail is to stop trying.

Stay safe and in good shape.

Rick

Fire Department
Age Groups

Age	Percent
20 – 29	20.0%
30 – 39	30.0%
40 – 49	38.8%
50+	11.2%

Field Data Entry

Implementation of EMS electronic reporting is underway!

Once implementation is completed, each medic unit will be equipped with a portable, handheld device that will enable them to enter information about calls while they are en-route.

Once on the scene, patient data and treatment information can be keyed into the portable device (laptop computer/pen-based tablet) and the report completed upon arrival at the receiving facility. This run data would then be downloaded into the Fire Department's database via a wireless network.

The next business day, the patient data and insurance information would be transferred electronically into the billing program, eliminating the need to re-key this information. Once this system is established and operational it will provide the following benefits:

- Allow timely billing for ambulance services by eliminating the need to re-key run data. It is anticipated that patient billing will occur within 10 business days from the time of service.
- The electronic transfer of data collected by field personnel will reduce the amount of data entry by one of the Billing Specialist, which will allow more time to be spent on delinquent account follow-up. In turn, this will generate more revenue through timely filing and refiling of insurance claims.
- This system will eliminate paper run sheets and will provide additional security for patient data. (This method for storing and transfer of patient information is compliant with the new HIPAA regulations.) We will also be able to capture and store patient signatures electronically for the Privacy Policy Notice and the Advanced Beneficiary Notice. (These forms are required for HIPAA and Medicare.)
- The Fire Department will also have the ability to query this database and use the information to do quality assurance and improve customer care.